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## **ADEQ Director Owens Announces that Nearly 1,700 Arizona Students Have Taken the Pledge to Protect the State's Natural Resources**

PHOENIX (May 7, 2008) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Director Steve Owens announced today that nearly 1,700 elementary and junior high school students throughout Arizona signed ADEQ's "Earth Day Pledge" last month to "recycle, conserve energy and save water to protect Arizona's resources." ADEQ sponsored the pledge as part of the department's Earth Month activities.

The schools with the most students signing the pledge included:

- Territorial Elementary School of Chino Valley in Yavapai County (528 students, which is 95 percent of the school's total enrollment);
- West Park Elementary of Buckeye in Maricopa County (336 students);
- Snowflake Intermediate School of Snowflake in Navajo County (335 students);
- Arts Academy at Estrella Mountain of Tolleson in Maricopa County (175 students);
- Chester Newton Montessori School of Camp Verde in Yavapai County (104 students); And,
- Blue Ridge Elementary School in Pinetop-Lakeside in Navajo County (22 students from a third-grade class).

Also, more than 100 students from Gateway Elementary and the Creighton School, both in Phoenix, signed the pledge at the Arizona National Guard Earth Day event April 23 at the Papago Military Reservation. Fifty-one (51) students from various schools in Tucson also signed the pledge.

"As we expected, the Earth Day pledge proved to be a great way for students to get involved during all the activities of Earth Month and for teachers to generate discussion of environmental issues," Director Owens said. "This was the first time we asked students to sign a pledge like this, and we are delighted with the response. We look forward to continuing to work with school districts across Arizona to help them find more ways to interest students in the environment in the future."

The Pledge asks children to recycle, turn off the water while brushing their teeth, turn off the lights when leaving a room and donate old usable toys and books instead of throwing them away. Also, riding a bike or walking when children can, to never litter and dispose of trash properly, and to turn off the TV and electronic games when they are not in use. The Pledge is on the ADEQ website at [www.azdeq.gov/function/education/index.html](http://www.azdeq.gov/function/education/index.html).